Nation

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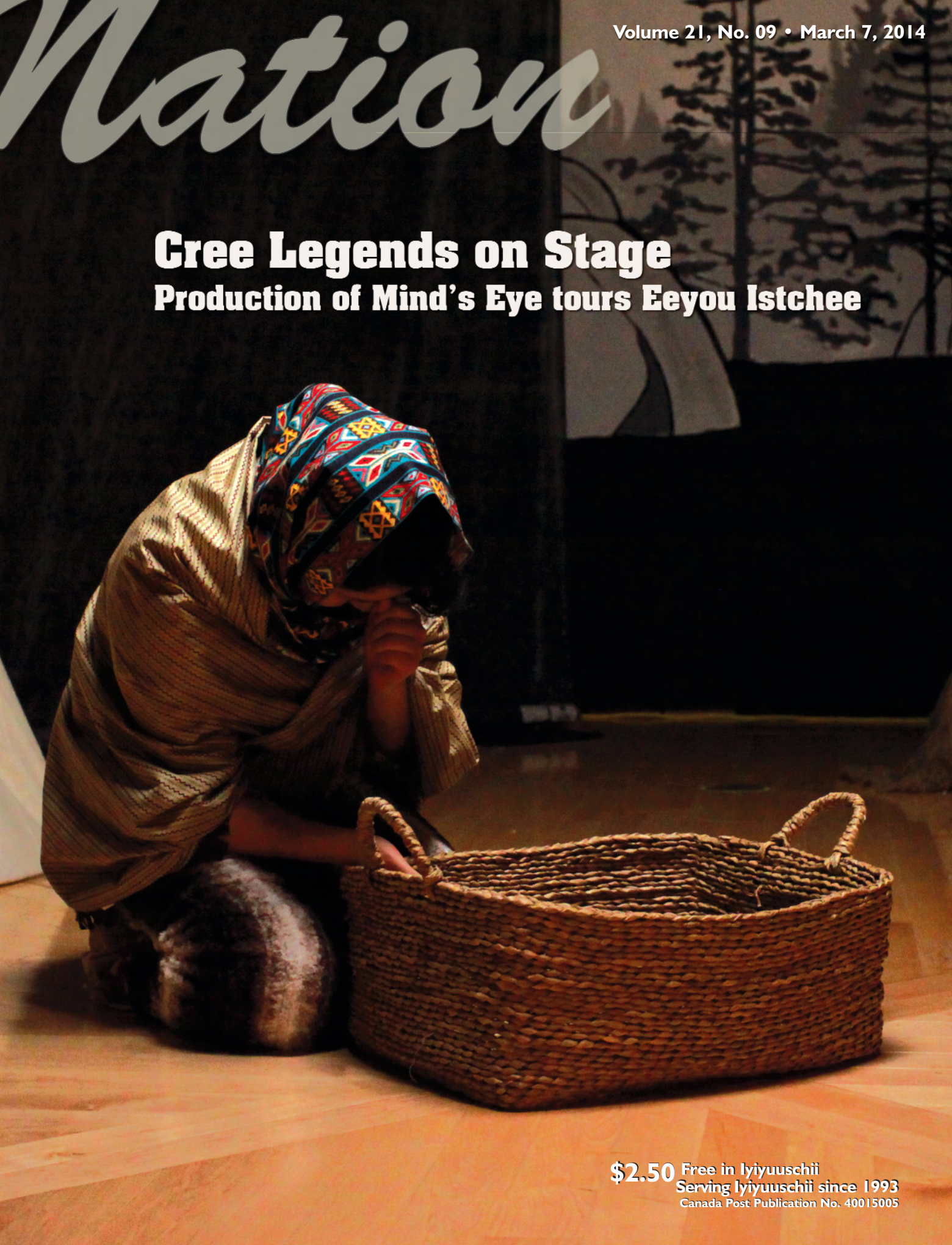
Cree Legends on Stage

Production of Mind's Eye tours Eeyou Istchee



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Journeys of hope and determination

by Will Nicholls

I am always impressed by the Cree of James Bay who make huge sacrifices on behalf of their community and their nation.

Adults and teenagers from both sides of the James Bay have made epic journeys from remote northern communities to bring their messages to Ottawa.

The courage of these young people is astounding. To make these sorts of journeys through adverse conditions is incredibly brave and deserving of respect. They traveled through freezing temperatures many people in the south would shudder at.

They came to bring a message about issues they as youth were concerned about. In bringing them to the forefront and getting Canadians talking about them they hoped for positive results.

Led by Danny Metatawabin, a group of walkers left the James Bay Cree community of Attawapiskat this January 4 on a trek of more than 1,700 kilometres to Ottawa to raise awareness and call for action to honour First Nations treaties and rights.

Last March, a group of young people from the James Bay Cree community of Whapmagoostui, Quebec, arrived at Parliament Hill in Ottawa, ending a 1,600-kilometre trek meant to bring attention to Aboriginal issues.

Six youths and a guide left Whapmagoostui in January to snowshoe and walk to Ottawa in support of the Idle No More movement. They called the trek "The Journey of Nishiyuu," which means "The Journey of the People" in Cree.

Neither group was greeted publically by the Canadian government. In both cases, mainstream media coverage of walkers and their concerns was halfhearted at best.

I feel that if it was a group of non-Natives walking from Quebec City or Toronto to Ottawa it would have been a much different story both from politicians and the media. However, a group of First Nations people making these types of incredible journeys are taken for granted in some way.

I see it as a case of subtle racism. First Nations are still seen as being nomadic peoples who are used to these types of hardships and thus it wasn't really all that impressive.

As I write this, another group of walkers from my community are undertaking a Wellness Journey. I remember mine. It was a life-changing experience even though I only joined the walk for the last week. It was one of the most difficult things I have done. Some days I snowshoed through slush. Other days were unbelievably cold. Yet other days involved helping the dogs pull my toboggan over a mountain. Each day involved setting up camp, getting water and firewood and preparing our meals. In the end it was ultimately rewarding. We arrived back in Mistissini to a warm welcome as many people came out to greet us. One of my cousins with another group lost enough weight he could tighten his belt three more notches.

These aren't easy trips for anyone, Aboriginal or not. The walkers who journeyed to Ottawa were incredibly brave and deserving of respect. Unfortunately they didn't find that respect from our government. They made many friends along the way and Canadians assisted and cheered them on. So some of the messages they brought from the North did not fall on deaf ears. I commend these people for their astounding courage.

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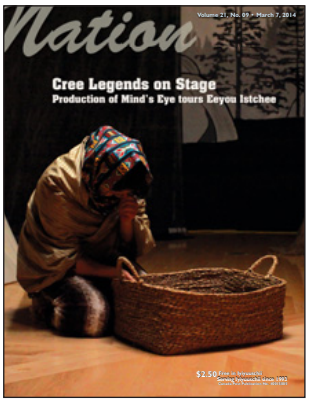

Siikun Wapachee from the theatrical presentation the Mind's Eye

photo by:
Nano Debassige

Govern this

by Sonny Orr

Govern your life accordingly, something a judge uttered at a small crime court to the guilty one. And sometimes, the guilty pay their dues accordingly and learn a lesson from the experience. They contribute back to society and all goes well. Some, however, remain rebellious and buck the system. Sometimes, I think, we are self-destructive, a bomb with an unpredictable fuse. When? Who knows? Who cares?

Our energy is volatile, ready to blow at any time. There are so many youth with so much energy with nowhere to expend it. Like a bomb, which is tightly contained to release the most amount of energy in the shortest time. Most times, this explosion is destructive.

If we could take the same energy and channel it in a productive way, we would have a powerful engine to drive the economy. Once you get used to driving entire populations and industries, it's time to make a homestead somewhere. Homesteads are like home bases where vast areas of land are used for that homestead.

Our homestead doesn't have to be directly connected to the village or community by infrastructure services. Our homestead could be hundreds of kilometres away, a self-contained family structure deep in Eeyou Istchee. Heck, we used to be able to do this with an outhouse and cabin. But hey, who says it has to be a cabin?

Solar, wind, water and heat are energy sources on the land. They could all be harnessed to power a comfortable sprawling (because there's no lots, no boundaries) mansion. In the city, this is what everyone dreams of. For us, for some reason, we look to the urban areas for inspiration. Huh? Go figure.

It's a bit like the child who rushes to grow up and when adulthood comes around, wishes for the years of lost youth. We have to live our age and now we have to grow up and stand on our own. Time to govern ourselves accordingly.

Governance does have many benefits. Yes, the ability to tax. I can't wait for the new tax department, whose main job would be to sort out everyone's crumpled sales slips and send them to the government for a return! Yay! Tax, what's that?

Another goodie would be the ability to actually access our own lands with our own piece of paper! Oh my God! Think of the possibilities! And then… tax return time! Wow, this is better than Child Tax! Yes, our own tax pain! (Sometimes referred to a tax gain). Better still, casinos! Wow! What power! Wait a minute, allow me revel for a few moments.

Of course, having said all that, the laws could change slightly. For example, the alcohol laws of Quebec would supersede our paranoiac bylaws, and finally, order will come to the house of bylaws. One of favourites will be to reinvent the need for soapstone, which for some strange reason, is the only material that is considered to be wholly owned by the Cree. Talcum anyone?

Maybe my gold mine will actually come true, and we will truly be walking the talk again in our backyard.

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Equality and progress

Virginia Wabano reflects on International Women's Day

by Amy German

Virginia Wabano, President of the Cree Women of Eeyou Istchee Association

March 8 is the day the United Nations designated to celebrate women's accomplishments; it is also an opportunity to highlight change needed to help women take another step forward on the long march to equality.

The UN theme for this year's International Women's Day is "Equality for women and progress for all." To observe the event, the Nation spoke with Virginia Wabano, president of the Cree Women of Eeyou Istchee Association (CWEIA).

Wabano observed that while over 65% of women in Eeyou Istchee were well educated, Cree women still find face obstacles obtaining skilled employment on par with Cree men. Equality between men and women exists when both sexes are able to share equally in the distribution of power and influence, Wabano noted, a central goal of the CWEIA.

"A critical aspect of promoting gender equality is the empowerment of women, with a focus on identifying and readdressing power imbalances and giving women more autonomy to manage their own lives. Women's empowerment is vital to sustainable development and the realization of human rights for all," said Wabano.

To celebrate the influential positions women have held in Cree society and those who blazed the trail for women's rights, the CWEIA will host a special event March 8 at the Forestel Hotel in Val d'Or under the theme "Inspiring Change." Wabano said the theme represents today's female leaders who continue to give voice to issues of inequality and who work to build a future free of discrimination, violence and poverty.

There is much work left to be done. Wabano said Aboriginal women are deeply affected by social policy decisions because they are doubly disadvantaged by gender and race.

"One of the biggest threats to Aboriginal women today is they are more vulnerable to domestic violence, and more likely to be caregivers for children and older people, the reduced commitment to social programs and services has significant immediate and long-term consequences. Most importantly, poverty and dependency, especially for the disproportionate numbers of single mothers must be addressed," said Wabano.

CWEIA is working to help these women out of poverty by ensuring that the necessary employment opportunities are available. Aboriginal women also suffer physical abuse at higher rates and severity than their non-Native sisters. Wabano said CWEIA is organizing initiatives to facilitate the emergence of strong Aboriginal women who can change these odds.

Without proper support, First Nations women can fall prey to predators, as was pointed out so clearly in the Roos-Remillard study on the Inuit of Iqualuit being vulnerable to human trafficking. Wabano brought this issue up at a council board meeting in early February.

"This is a particular concern, as traffickers are keenly aware of how to hone in on an individual's needs, wants and vulnerabilities, with the goal of sexual exploitation or luring youth into forced sex work. We hear of women being forced into situations of having unsafe living conditions in order to try to stay away from homelessness, a state in which they would be even less safe, and into dangerous life-threatening situations, and often the sex-trade industry," said Wabano.

While CWEIA's primary goal is to enhance, promote and foster the social, economic, cultural, and political well-being of Aboriginal women in Eeyou Istchee, they also work with provincial and national associations of Aboriginal and Inuit women.

Wabano said the CWEIA is now focused on its five-year plan and achieving the milestones it sets out. Right now they are trying to plan out the 2014 Healing Conference in conjunction with the Nishiiyuu Men.

"We would like to acknowledge the Nishiiyuu Men for their ongoing support in creating awareness to decrease violence against women in Eeyou Istchee. The primary objectives are to advocate on behalf of Aboriginal women, to promote awareness of issues affecting Aboriginal women through education and training, and to foster a sense of community among Aboriginal women through shared dialogue, meetings, workshops and conferences," said Wabano.

The CWEIA will be hosting its Annual General Assembly in Whapmagoostui September 6-7, which is open to everyone.

"CWEIA encourages women to get involved with their local groups in order to address and collectively overcome the challenges in all spheres of life they face as mothers, daughters, sisters, aunties, grandmothers and most of all, as an Aboriginal women. You will bring attention to important issues affecting women today such as raising awareness about domestic violence, sexual assault/rape, equality and other serious problems that women face," said Wabano.

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Missing kids found

Facebook appeal leads to happy reunion for children lost in a blizzard

By Akiva Levitas

What seemed like a normal weekend outing to their trap lines quickly turned into a nightmare for five children from the Shecapio family February 21 when they got lost in a blizzard 25 kilometres north of Mistissini. Although it easily could have turned tragic, the ordeal had a happy ending as the community came together to help find the missing children.

The problems began when two of the three snowmobiles they set out on broke down. Concerned for their health, parents Morley and Jennifer Shecapio stayed behind with the snowmobiles as the children, Sylvester (17), Rachel (15), Diane (14), Marlon (9) and Tyson (1) took the third machine ahead to the cabin.

Desperate for help, Jennifer posted a request on Facebook asking for assistance. "I saw the distress call from Morley's wife," family member Larry Shecapio said. "They said they have been there for hours and they were getting cold."

After calling the emergency services, Larry joined the search party and along with his brother George they set off in the storm. Heading towards the narrows by Lake Mistissini, they had come across the location where the distress call had been made but no one was there.

"We found their stuff but we couldn't find the skidoos," Larry said. "We didn't know what was going on, so I messaged her on Facebook and she told me they were already at the cabin but that her children were missing."

With the blizzard picking up, the search party switched from helping a couple with their broken skidoos to finding five missing children including a one-year-old baby. The blizzard made the search extremely difficult with tracks being covered almost instantly.

"It was already nine o'clock at night and it was really, really bad," Larry said of the conditions. "The blizzard was blowing snow like crazy, you could not see far at all and there were four of us."

After continuing the search throughout the night, the search party took turns sleeping at Morley's cabin as they waited for the morning light. "When we got to searching again at six in the morning, we began at the place where we first saw a skidoo trail the night before," Larry said.

The search party had split up and as they were searching Larry noticed something on the ice. As he got closer he saw it was a glove he did not recognize. He took a photo of it and sent it over to Jennifer to see if she could identify. She recognized it immediately as Sylvester's glove, and immediately the trail for the lost children warmed up.

Not long after the glove was found, the children were discovered around one kilometre from the campsite. Thanks to the quick thinking of Sylvester, the children had kept warm for the 12 hours they were missing by making a makeshift shelter and covering it with a tarp.

Sylvester's glove that Larry found leading them to the location of the children

This photo of baby Tyler Baribeau was posted on facebook to reassure mother and family of the child's wellbeing

After the kids had left their parents, their skidoo had become stuck in slushy ice on the lake. Using his traditional knowledge, Sylvester moved the kids to shore and set up the shelter. After they were discovered, the search party had noticed that if their skidoo had not been stuck in the slush the ordeal could have had a far more tragic outcome.

"In the direction their skidoo was gearing, there was an open water hole," Larry said. "If they were to have kept going and with such low visibility, something tragic could have happened."

But throughout the ordeal, the community of Mistissini came together to help search for the missing children and thanks to the quick thinking of the eldest child, Sylvester, the story finished with a happy reunion.

Brandon Oates and Siikun Wapachee

While most Crees grew up listening to their Elders tell them legends and tales of the old days, a new theatre play features an original exploration of Cree folklore.

Mind's Eye is written and directed by Cree artists. According to Gaston Cooper, a communications and marketing officer at the Aanischaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute (ACCI), the project started as a way to promote a book of the same name by Emily Masty and Susan Marshall. The book was launched when the play premiered in Whapmagoostui March 1.

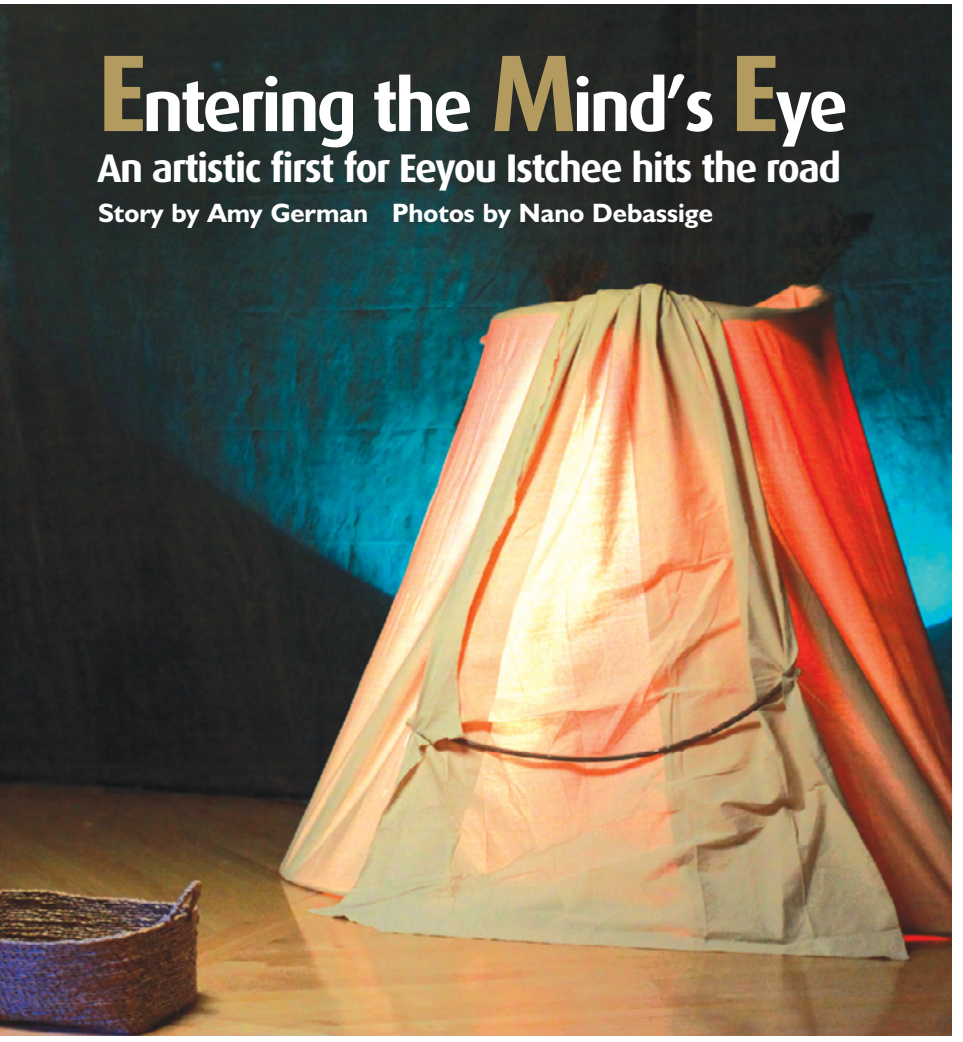
The theatrical version – based on the first few chapters of the book – has since developed a life and spirit of its own.

Acclaimed Cree playwright, actor, visual artist and filmmaker Shirley Cheechoo wrote and directed the stage adaptation. It features Cree legends told by (mainly) Cree actors in a professional production that will tour all nine communities throughout the month of March.

Entering the Mind's Eye

An artistic first for Eeyou Istchee hits the road

Story by Amy German Photos by Nano Debassige



Redfern Mianscum

According to Cooper, this is the largest project that the ACCI has ever undertaken. No other production has ever had its scope or potential to reach so much of the population. He hopes it will become a point of cultural pride.

"Some of these stories have been passed down from generation to generation and it is amazing how we have been able to keep them alive," said Cooper.

"When you look back at this, we still have the same respect for the animals (culturally) and you see that in these stories. As a hunter, I often find myself asking, 'What was this like a long time ago?' When you read the script or the book, you get a clearer picture as to why things were the way that they were."

With the exception of Cheechoo, virtually none of those involved with the play from Eeyou Istchee have any previous theatrical experience. This didn't stop the ACCI from hiring as many Crees as possible to bring it to life onstage.

As a result, most of the performers are from Eeyou Istchee, with a few Native professionals pulled in from other First Nations in Quebec and Ontario. They include Una Cheechoo and Matthew Manitowabi, both from Manitoulan Island, Ontario, and Mohawk actor Brandon Oakes of Akwesasne.

According to Cooper, these professionals gave those who were new to the acting world the opportunity to learn from seasoned actors. It works, as the production possesses a seamless quality.

"They seemed to click right away and became like one big happy family. It is amazing how well they have managed to work together and gain experience from one another. Our Cree actors have been teaching the others Cree words and in return they have been acquiring all sorts of valuable information on acting," said Cooper.

The cast and crew that the ACCI pulled from the communities actually found out about the project through Facebook, Cooper noted. The social media site also helped create a tremendous buzz, getting over 2000 hits online within a few days.

Now after years of fundraising and several weeks of blood, sweat and tears, the hope is that the play will go far beyond simply entertaining the Cree audiences. Cooper said the real objective is to help these tales of yore live on in the hearts of the Cree people and continue to be passed on.

As the multilingual play starts its tour of Eeyou Istchee, Cooper is excited to see the youth reaction as well as the impact on the Elders who once shared these cherished stories with their children.

"We had a fun time with this because you can actually follow the whole play, whether you speak English or Cree from the way it is done. We used English and Cree because we wanted to spice it up and I think the audience will appreciate that," said Cooper.

Another aspect that has made this experience unique is the fact that it has been developed within a museum, a rich resource for the historical and cultural research of pre-contact Cree life. But this location added restrictions in less obvious areas.

According to Ashley Manitowabi, the play's production designer, any element from nature brought into the ACCI actually had to be quarantined to avoid contamination with the other Cree artifacts within the building.

Taking care of the production's look, sound and feel, Manitowabi said he was initially a little overwhelmed as the play features 31 different characters. But having immediate access to so much Cree history helped him recreate that world.

"I am trying to use as many elements of nature as I can," said Manitowabi. I have three structures right now: a shaking, a dwelling and a beaver dam. Typically I would have used a lot of raw materials for that but I actually used a lot of plastic piping for it. I have painted it and dressed it, and covered two of them in canvas."

Manitowabi said working with people who live in their own Native language was inspiring.

Gearing up for the first show, Manitowabi was looking forward to seeing everything come together. "The first show is going to be a celebration. It is a spiritual thing. Everything on stage is a spiritual so it is going to be the greatest thing for me," he said.

To ensure the production is authentic, Paula Menarick has been hard at work sewing costumes created from long-forgotten elements of Cree garb.

Menarick said the show's costumes are replicas of what was worn between the 1600s and 1800s. Characters in Mind's Eye will be decked out in beaded hoods and hide outfits. Women's traditional dresses had detachable sleeves and

Matthew Manitowabi, Wayne Neegan and Una Cheechoomatthew

men's hats were almost pillbox-shaped with a point in the front and a tail in the back.

She also noted something very interesting about the leggings of that era.

"The women's would be shaped into a curve whereas the men's were shaped into a point. It was the flap that was shaped into a point or a curve and the reason that they would do this is because to differentiate man from woman, hunter from women and so that the good skull or the spirit of the land could recognize who a hunter is by looking at the leggings so that she (the spirit) could send him food or game so that he could kill for his family," said Menarick.

As for the stars of the show, Mind's Eye is an incredible opportunity.

Eastmain's 22-year-old Alice Gilpin may be a novice to theatre but she is quickly gaining confidence and loving every moment of it.

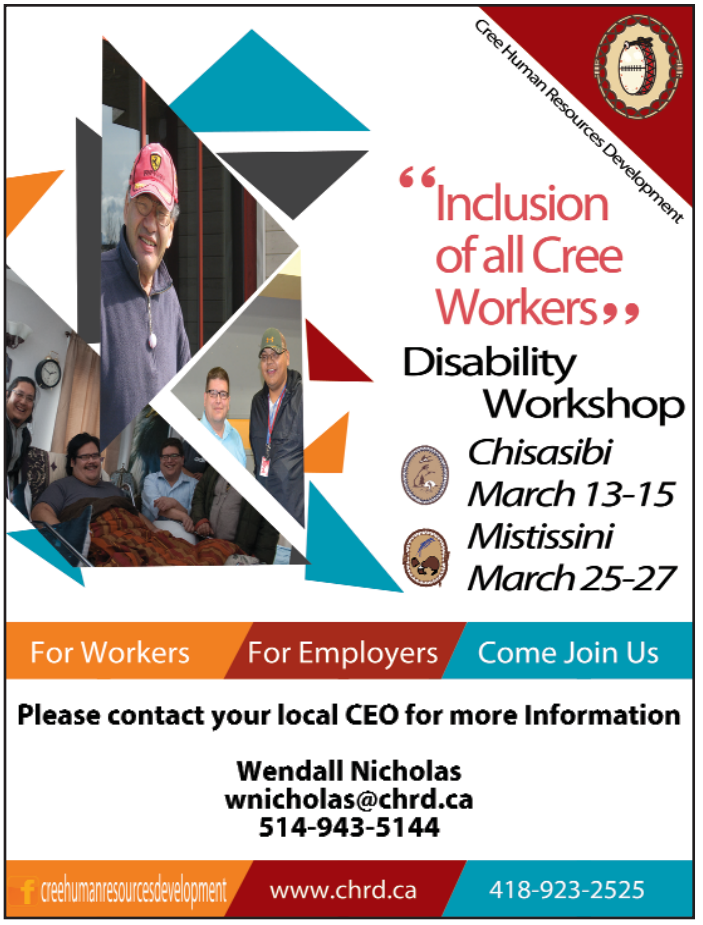
"This is really exciting as it is my first time doing any acting but I am having a lot of fun. It's a lot of hard work and I am really enjoying my work with my co-workers," said Gilpin.

Among other characters, Gilpin plays the female spirit of the caribou. She said that playing roles that are so significant to Cree culture and history has been a "powerful" experience.

"I am hoping everyone who sees this play enjoys it. It is such an honour being a part of it," said Gilpin.

Time on the set also seems to fly by for 18-year-old Siikun Wapachee, the production's youngest cast member.

The Oujé-Bougoumou native said that being part of Mind's Eye has brought her out of her shell. The self-described "shy girl" initially felt intimidated, but she said that her director and the other staff helped her connect to her character and transform on stage.



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"I like how I get to be other people, other than myself. I am putting myself into another person's shoes antd it is fun to think about what would a mother do in this situation? I am not a mother and so it is fun to think how a mother would react to how her son turning into a caribou right before her very eyes," said Wapachee.

For Tom Polson, an Algonquin who has lived in his adoptive community of Waswanipi for over a decade, the production is a life-changing experience.

"I am making a career debut with this play and it is a beautiful time for me to start this," said Polson.

He hopes to act again in the future and might even get an agent. He treasures every aspect of his experience. "Everybody is working together and sometimes we get to do other things. Yesterday we were crafting things and so that was really nice to do some work behind the scenes. We go over our lines a lot when we are off set and everyone is trying to help one another. I love it," said Polson.

Bringing decades of arts experience and cultural pride to the production, Shirley Cheechoo said she enjoyed the challenges that Mind's Eye has presented as it has forged the way for all sorts of creativity.

The most exciting part of the production has been working with the acting newcomers and seeing them evolve, particularly where volume is concerned, she said.

"I have seen them come from a point where I could hardly hear a peep from them. When I asked them their names, I would hear whispers and now I hear them belting out a song or a chant. It's overwhelming," said Cheechoo.

Cheechoo hopes the play is a magical experience for everyone involved. She was captivated by the original manuscript and wanted to see its stories live on forever.

"When I read the stories, I was like 'Oh, my God, I have never heard this before in my whole life, about the spirit of the caribou and the spirit of the animals and how they helped the people a long time ago.' It was a history lesson for me. And I think that this will be a history lesson for everyone else who watches it," said Cheechoo.

The tour date of Mind's Eye: March 6-7, Wemindji; March 8 & 10 Eastmain; March 11-12 Waskaganish; March 13-14 Nemaska; March 16-17 Mistissini; March 18-19 Waswanipi; March 20-21 Oujé-Bougoumou; March 25 Ambassador's Gala, Oujé-Bougoumou

We liked his outfit

Hot pink gun for a hot girl

Making the outdoors outstanding

Montreal's 2014 hunting, fishing and camping show

by Amy German

There are few better places to find the latest in outdoorsman tech than the Hunting, Fishing and Camping Show, which this year took place at Montreal's Place Bonaventure February 20-23.

From scopes to crossbows, high-tech feet warmers to fancy goose calls, this show had it all.

With hundreds of kiosks, it takes a keen eye to find the goods that would interest an Eeyou audience. Naturally, we started with the firearms.

Dropping by the Browning booth, Claude Chartrand was happy to promote the company's latest offerings.

"We have some over and under shotguns that are new this year and we have also introduced the A5 semi-automatic shotgun, which is used for goose hunting and duck hunting," said Chartrand. "Also in the category of rifles we have introduced the Eclipse Hunter rifle in different categories, it is manufactured in 13 different calibres.

For more info: www.browning.com.

Next, Alain from Le Baron Sports was happy to show off the Henry Mare's Leg Lever Action pistol, now legal in Canada. With hunting as a family experience becoming increasingly popular, this particular model came with a number lock that required a code, making it an ideal weapon for a younger person as they wouldn't be able to fire it unless mom or dad unlocked it.

"They call this the Mare's Leg because it just like what the cowboys used to have. It is a great gun," said Alain.

For more info: http://henryrepeating.com/

Claude Doree from Agences de Sports Tri-Omf was showcasing the Benelli line. He was quick to pull a Super Black Eagle semi-auto 12 gauge , which featured a 3-1/2 chamber, off the wall to give us a closer look at the best that Benelli has to offer goose hunters.

"This model comes with five different chokes and a comfort-tech stock which reduces the recoil about 35%. It only has 10 different parts so it's very easy to take down in a field if it gets dumped in the mud, for example. It cleans up really quickly and comes with a 10-year warranty. It's the best shotgun on the market right now," said Doree.

He also brought out the Beretta A400 Xtreme, which he described as one of the company's finest offerings for 2013. It is another 3-1/2-chamber shotgun, but this one features a gas-

Claude Chartrand of Browning

Hotness in the bush

operated system. This was his other recommendation for top-of-the-line technology.

Meanwhile, Alain Goulet from Vortex Canada had a fine selection of binoculars on display. For the northern hunter, he recommended the Razor HD model.

"This is the 10x50, but it's also available in a 8x42, a 10x42 and a 12x50. It is a high-end piece that has HD glass and so it's good for bright images and colours. This is an awesome pair of binoculars," said Goulet.

"These retail between $1500 to $1700 but what makes it such a great product is the quality of the prisms used here. Also they are completely waterproofed and so you can literally use them in all kinds of conditions, plus they come with a lifetime warranty."

We then encountered several gentlemen representing eastern outdoors sales for Savage Arms. They suggested the new B.MAG as the best choice from their line for hunters.

When asked about the company's Indian-themed name and logo, Stéphane Pépin was glad to tell the story of how it came about.

He explained that the company is actually named for its founder, Arthur Savage, who began Savage Arms back in 1894 and the company's Indian head logo is a licensed image of Chief Lame Deer. As the company's history goes, Savage actually made a deal with the chief for discounted rifles in exchange for the tribe's support and endorsement. Lame Deer later gave Savage the image of himself as a gift for the company to use as he was so enamoured with their products.

"We actually get several calls about this every day," said Pépin.

Also on hand from Savage Arms was Yannick Lamarre, who said that the 17W SM B.MAG that used the new rim-fire cartridges is an awesome choice.

"The difference between this product and the others is that this one can go 3000 feet per second and so it is a niche between the centre fire and a lower rim fire that we had. This one will supersede all rim-fire performance," said Lamarre.

The B.MAG he was holding also came with rotary mags and featured a standard barrel. Nut Lamarre said the company had just announced

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------ AN INITIATIVE OF ------

that it would be making a bull barrel available for that particular product by the end of 2014.

Moving along, we checked out the seemingly endless bounty of vendors flogging hunting apparel and even novelty hunting apparel. This year the show even had hunting gear just for the ladies.

Line Giguère was there for Confections Gali, a Quebec-based company that features all sorts of exquisite hunting garments for women that combined sleek with sexy and functional in a whole new way.

"We custom make most of our products to fit the clients. They can pick their camo pattern, the pockets and the sizing when ordering so the customer really gets what they want," said Giguère.

THE SUPER BLACK EAGLE SEMI-AUTO 12 GAUGE COMES WITH FIVE DIFFERENT CHOKES AND A COMFORT-TECH STOCK WHICH REDUCES THE RECOIL ABOUT 35%. IT ONLY HAS 10 DIFFERENT PARTS SO IT'S VERY EASY TO TAKE DOWN IN A FIELD IF IT GETS DUMPED IN THE MUD, FOR EXAMPLE. IT CLEANS UP REALLY QUICKLY AND COMES WITH A 10-YEAR WARRANTY.

Her booth offered a wide variety of jackets, hunting pants, hats, pyjamas and even lingerie, all of which were completely customizable for the client so that they would be getting something to suit every shape.

The high quality of stitching and fabric were such that it is easy to imagine that movie stars would wear these garments during hunting expeditions.

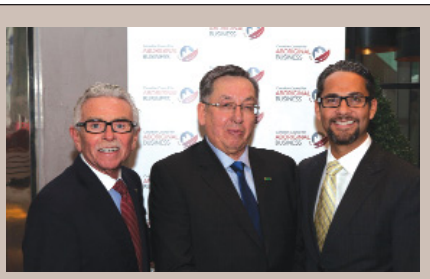
For more info: www.confectionsgali.com/

Call maker Rhéal Charlebois, of Recall Designs, had an incredibly array of calls in just about every colour of the rainbow and every finish of wood.

"This year I have my short fuse call – because the call is short and fast. It is a really good call," he said.

Over at the Distribution Plein Air booth, Philip Girard suggested a unique backpack set up with special straps to carry your crossbow or shotgun.

"With the Archery Crossbow Bolt Backpack you can strap on your crossbow or rifle to the bag so that your two hands are free while you travel through the bush. Plus, it has all sorts of pockets for your accessories and ammo," said Girard.



Board of Compensation & Creeco Inc.

Congratulations to Mr. William Macleod for his induction into the "Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame"

The Board of Compensation, CREECO and its subsidiaries congratulate Mr. William Macleod of Mistissini, who was inducted into the "Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame" on February 4, 2014 at the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business Toronto Gala.

William is the former President/CEO of the Cree Construction & Development Company (CCDC) and Gestion ADC wherein he served as such for 11 years until he announced his retirement in May 2013. William was also involved with the Board of Compensation as a Board Member from 1995 to 2001 and he was on the various Committees and Board of Directors of CREECO, Air Creebec and Valpiro.

Wiiliam, thank you for your many years of dedicated service within the companies and we wish you continued success in your future endeavours.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and employees of the Board of Compensation and CREECO,

Darlene Cheechoo
Chairperson/President

Air Creebec Inc

The Board of Directors and all employees of Air Creebec Inc. want to congratulate Mr. William MacLeod for his induction into the 2014 Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame (ABHF).

Valpiro

The Valpiro team congratulates Mr. William MacLeod for his lifetime achievement in his induction into the 2014 Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame (ABHF).

CCDC & Gestion ADC

Congratulations William MacLeod on your Lifetime Achievement Award from all of us here at the Cree Construction & Development Company and Gestion ADC.

Robert Baribeau, *President/CEO*

William MacLeod and his family

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Moving into the main room of the event, which featured boats, vehicles, high-tech tools, fishing gear and outfitting camps, we found ourselves drawn to the Garmin booth.

Philip Boudreau was hawking high-tech GPS systems that doubled as fish finders for individuals looking to tech out their fishing experience.

"This is the new 8000 system from Garmin and it is a touch screen GPS and a multi-function display so you can add a fish-finder, a down-view system and down scan imagery to see the bottom," said Boudreau.

Using its various functions, he demonstrated how the product used sonar to create an incredible underwater display using what he called the CHIRP Process Transducer. This allows for the product to use continuous waves and echo to make crisp and clear images.

For more info: www.garmin.com

Chasing the vacation dollars of Quebecers were tourism representatives from Maine and other New England states. But none were as memorable as Mackie, a casino worker from Atlantic City, who attends the show every year wearing stilts and clown glitter to showcase Cape May, New Jersey.

"We are back again as we just love this area and would really love it if you were to come to our area to visit us," said Mackie. "We have beautiful beaches, sparkling sands, history, casinos, resorts, Atlantic City and much more."

Along the New Jersey coast, fishing enthusiasts can try to hook flounder, white perch, whiting, king fish or mackerel.

About a nine-hour drive from Montreal, Mackie said this is a great place to take the kids to the beach as the waters are calm and the waves aren't as intense as places like Wildwood, Ocean City or Cape May.

For more info: www.thejerseycape.com

For anyone who has ever wanted to go on a fancy, guided walleye or trout fishing tour on St. Lawrence River or Lac Témiscouata à Cabano, Les excursions de pêche Bruno Morency were on hand to provide a memorable experience.

"In May, we fish on Lake Témiscouata for lake trout and speckled trout up to six pounds," said Paulin Gingras, a Morency associate.

Bruno Morency, who has the aura of a movie star, offers these tours on the St. Lawrence, featuring his 19 years of experience and expertise at fishing walleye on the river.

"The river is a great place for walleye fishing because the fish population is so high," said Morency.

For more info:
www.pecheaudorebrunomorency.com

Another basic and incredibly handy product we came across was the Pad Auto Collant, promoted by

Titus Shecapio

Serge Genais. This rubbery little rectangle is a self-adhering contraption to stick your phone, pens, glasses, GPS, coins or you name it to the dash of your car, boat or ATV without getting them gummed up. Reusable and compact, it's perfect for the person who keeps misplacing things.

For more info: solutionideale.com

To keep your feet warm on cold days outdoors, Simon Senecal from Thermastrom has a solution in the form of heated insoles. Developed in Quebec, they feature a non-woven textile that gives off heat and a battery holder that can be strapped on your calf. They are all leather and feature a slim fit that will slip into any kind of shoe, ski boot or regular hunting boot.

While Senecal wouldn't recommend them for -50 temperatures because the batteries would drain too quickly, the heaters work fine up to -30 C.

For more info:
www.thermastrom.com/en/index.html

As we wound up our tour, we were happy to run into several familiar faces from Eeyou Istchee at the Mistissini booth proudly representing the Cree tourism industry.

Titus Shecapio said that while it was a slow first day, he knew things would pick up.

"We are here to represent Mistissini and all of the different tourism-related businesses that we have in the community. I have been telling people about the region and promoting the lake, as it is the largest freshwater lake in Quebec and our main attraction," said Shecapio.

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GOLDCORP
ÉLÉONORE

First Nations hockey stars make their mark in Sochi

by Daniel Coyle

Habs goaltender Carey Price

The biggest story of the Olympic hockey tournament was the dominating play of Team Canada. Much to the surprise of many fans and hockey pundits, Canada won gold not by outgunning opponents but through adhering to a defence-first system engineered by coach Mike Babcock. Team Canada Executive Director Steve Yzerman, the primary architect of Canada's back-to-back gold medal performances, put it simply when asked if this was the best defensive team that has ever taken the ice for Canada.

"I think so," said Yzerman.

For Canada, the defensive emphasis started in the net. Habs goaltender Carey Price travelled to Sochi sporting impressive numbers, including 26 wins and a .925 save percentage, fourth in the NHL among goaltenders who have appeared in at least 40 games this season. Indeed, Price's heroics have kept Montreal in the playoff hunt in the NHL's ultra-competitive Eastern Conference.

Price, who hails from the small BC town of Anahim Lake and is a member of the Ulkatcho First Nation, was particularly outstanding in the week prior to the Olympic break, leading the Habs to three straight wins while giving up just three goals.

But, apparently not all the so-called "hockey insiders" in Canada's sports media watch a lot of Habs' hockey. Many cited a lack of international experience and a checkered playoff record as reasons why Price, who in 2007 backstopped Canada to gold in the 2007 World Junior Championships and the Hamilton Bulldogs to the Calder Cup, should be passed over in favour of veterans Roberto Luongo and Mike Smith.

Price silenced the critics by posting back-to-back shutouts when it mattered most, including a 31-save gem in Canada's 1-0 Olympic semi-final win over USA, and a 24-save performance in Canada's 3-0 gold-medal victory over Sweden.

"That was the hardest-working team I've ever seen," Price told ESPN after the gold medal victory. "I really can't say enough about that group of defensemen and that overall team in front of me. Our work ethic was what won us this championship."

Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee

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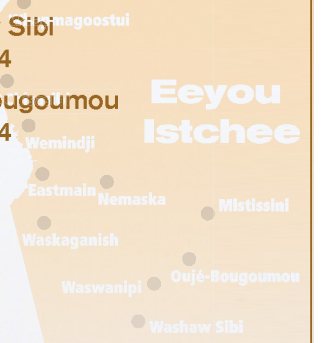
- Washaw Sibi
  Fall 2014
- Oujé-Bougoumou
  Fall 2014



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March 4, 2014, Prospector and Developers Association of Canada (PDAC) presented to M. Jim A. Macleod the Highest Honour of the SKOOKUM JIM AWARD for Aboriginal achievements

Stornoway is proud to join the Cree Community in the celebration of M. Jim A. Mcleod's exceptional achievements and the many contributions that he has made in regards to mining, exploration, environmental assessment and the support of Aboriginal Youth.

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T.J. Oshie, an Ojibwe born in Washington State and raised in Warroad, Minnesota

Native hockey talent wasn't only on the ice. Latvia hired Ted Nolan to coach its national team of underdogs, who gave Canada a huge scare before finally falling 2-1 to the Canuck powerhouse.

Carey Price, however, was not the only First Nations hockey player to silence the naysayers with a standout performance in Sochi. Many eyebrows were raised when St. Louis Blues forward T.J. Oshie was added to Team USA. Oshie, an Ojibwe born in Washington State and raised in Warroad, Minnesota, got the Olympic nod over a number of very talented US players, including the Ottawa Senators' Bobby Ryan and Brandon Saad of the Chicago Blackhawks.

In the Americans' opening game of the tourney, a 7-1 rout of Slovakia, Oshie saw just under 11 minutes of ice time. In the following game, a much-anticipated showdown with Russia, Oshie again saw little action, recording just two shots on goal in just over nine minutes on the ice. But when 60 minutes of regulation, followed by five minutes of overtime left the score deadlocked at 2-2, it became very apparent why David Poile, general manager of Team USA, selected Oshie.

"THAT WAS THE HARDEST-WORKING TEAM I'VE EVER SEEN... OUR WORK ETHIC WAS WHAT WON US THIS CHAMPIONSHIP."

CAREY PRICE

Unlike in the NHL, where a different player must be used for each round of the shootout, in the Olympics a player may be used multiple times after the initial three rounds. So it was for TJ Oshie, who was the go-to guy for USA coach Dan Bylsma in six of the eight rounds of shootout required to settle the score against Russia.

Going head-to-head against Russian superstars Ilya Kovalchuk and Pavel Datsyuk, who were called on to make seven of Russia's eight shootout attempts, Oshie thrilled a global hockey audience with daring dekes and dangles, outscoring Kovalchuk and Datsyuk 4-3 to give the USA the victory and the top seed in the elimination round of the tournament.

"You are going to see T.J. Oshie be a household name after that display he put on today," said David Backes, Oshie's teammate both in Sochi and St. Louis. "Kids will be out on the pond, probably in Minnesota right now, throwing a five-hole on the goalie three or four times in a row."

Raffle wrapped up in red tape

Chisasibi's sport fundraising rules complicate racer's skidoo raffle

by Jesse Staniforth

To Chisasibi snowmobile racer Clayton House, the plan seemed simple. He wanted to ride for the Chisasibi Racing Team in the Chisasibi Snowmobile Challenge, originally scheduled to take place February 21-23 (now postponed to March 14-16). But he needed a racing machine. A sponsor stepped up to supply the snowmobile and his team organized a raffle and other fundraising events to pay for it.

Not so fast, said the Chisasibi Sports and Recreation Association (CSRA). Just as everything was ready to run the raffle, House said the CSRA shut him down.

"We were ready to distribute the tickets to all these places willing to help us; local businesses, even in Radisson an hour away," he told the Nation. (Full disclosure: *the Nation* was one of the Chisasibi Racing Team's sponsors.). "We've been getting calls non-stop from people who want to buy tickets – they want to support us, plus they want to get a chance to win the machine."

Unfortunately, said CSRA president Willard Wash, House didn't check with the CSRA over the timing of the raffle. As a result, the association wouldn't allow him to hold a raffle to raise funds for his snowmobile.

"We already gave him some fundraisers for him to do," Wash said. "We gave him a penny-social to fundraise with, we gave him a 50-50, we gave him a poker tournament. Plus we agreed to pay his

inscription of $2,000. The only thing that was denied him was the raffle. And this is the one he was really going after. So still he went ahead with it."

House said that his team carefully put together a letter explaining what they wanted and needed from the CSRA in the form of fundraising permissions.

"We wanted to show them in one shot what it looks like for us. They didn't budge on our sponsorship," House said, adding that an unnamed person at the CSRA office had assured him there wouldn't be a problem.

"To my understanding the guy who said that didn't do his part to run it through the committee [of the CSRA]," House said.

Wash explained that the CSRA governs fundraising for sports and recreation in Chisasibi because, in the past, too many events were taking place at the same time.

"We schedule everything to do with fundraising," he said. "We don't want any double-booking or conflicts with the minor and senior teams. We have a rotating schedule."

Wash says this is in the best interests of both sports groups and the public. If raffles take place on a schedule, community members won't have to pick and choose which tickets they can afford to buy on any given week.

Wash says that the timing of House's raffle conflicted with a draw intended to support the organization of the same race he wanted to enter, putting him in competition with the event itself.

"We only give raffles to people organizing events. He was just a participant in the event," Wash explained. "We gave Lindy [Bullfrog], who was organizing the ski-doo race, the raffle and told him to go ahead. We even offered to sell raffle tickets for him. Then he mentioned that he saw another raffle out there."

To House, it made sense that there would be more than one raffle for the event because of the cost of snowmobile racing.

"This is a more expensive sport than your local ball team going to a tournament," he said.

There's also the matter of community support. House represents the only team from Chisasibi entered in the race. And he wondered why the CSRA was being so rigid when they could leave it up to the people of Chisasibi to decide whether to buy his raffle tickets or not.

"We're trying to do things right – we're not trying to step on toes or rock the boat," he said. "It's just the approval from the CSRA [that we're missing]. The band council is all for it. Even the Chief was trying to buy tickets. They even sponsored it! They're scratching their heads, wondering what's wrong with the CSRA."

"WE'RE TRYING TO DO THINGS RIGHT – WE'RE NOT TRYING TO STEP ON TOES OR ROCK THE BOAT. IT'S JUST THE APPROVAL FROM THE CSRA [THAT WE'RE MISSING]. THE BAND COUNCIL IS ALL FOR IT. **EVEN THE CHIEF WAS TRYING TO BUY TICKETS. THEY EVEN SPONSORED IT! THEY'RE SCRATCHING THEIR HEADS, WONDERING WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE CSRA**."

According to House, a CSRA official even stopped one of his associates from selling raffle tickets to Chisasibi Chief Davey Bobbish at a minor hockey tournament.

"She said, 'You can't buy those,' and our helper was willing to give the Chief his money back, but the Chief said, 'No, keep it. I'm helping out the race team.'"

House suspects the CSRA is in a conflict of interest over fundraising events.

"They do stuff like sponsoring," he said. "They're going to take care of the sponsoring for entering the race, but they didn't want us to sell tickets. There's also another tournament – first week in March is one of the big tournaments we have in town. I'm sure they're saving all those dates to do raffles themselves."

Wash laughed off accusations that the CSRA has stood in House's way, noting there was already a raffle booked for that weekend. The CSRA doesn't have the power to punish House if he were to hold the raffle without permission, even though they have given him some sponsorship already. But Wash said that House and other potential raffle organizers should think about the best interests of the community.

"We're just telling him to stop, because it's not really fair to the other people holding raffles, and it wasn't approved by the CSRA," said Wash. "Everyone knows in town that the CSRA is the one that approves all the fundraising going on for the 18-and-over."

But House is fed up with the red tape of the CSRA, and he's ready to make it political.

"The group that's in there now, they've been trying to [deny fundraising] to other teams as well. It's almost like we should get all together and get those guys [in the CSRA] out of there. We're the ones who put them there. Maybe we can put in a different crew that's more flexible."

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UNDER THE NORTHERN SKY

The long road to Ottawa

by Xavier Kataquapit

Congratulations to the Omushkegowuk Walkers for making their trek to Ottawa all the way from Attawapiskat. These walkers represent our ability to exercise our democratic right to protest peacefully. That is a big deal these days when governments in our country and others are eroding our rights and freedoms and shirking their responsibilities to their citizens. Unfortunately, it seems that most people prefer to look the other way and don't think it is important to voice their opinions.

So, I am proud of the four original core group of walkers – Danny Metatawabin of Fort Albany and Attawapiskat trekkers Paul Mattinas, Brian Okimaw and Remi Nakogee. Many others joined them on the way. They struggled for almost two months over 1,700 kilometres through freezing temperatures and severe winter weather. You can view the group's Facebook page by searching for "Reclaiming Our Steps Past Present Future."

Many First Nations across the country have seen their treaty rights violated. The walkers decided that a peaceful protest would bring some attention to this injustice, especially since First Nations have very few avenues to influence government policy. Big-money concerns like oil, forestry, manufacturing and financial institutions have huge budgets to spend lobbying for governmental favours. First Nation people and the average non-Native Canadian have very little voice. Some people claim First Nation political organizations have big budgets for lobbying, but compared to corporate special interests, they pale in comparison.

The usual way for First Nation people to push for change is through representatives with political organizations, like the Assembly of First Nations, Chiefs of Ontario, Nishnawbe-Aski Nation, Muskegowuk Council and many other such groups across the country. Due to limited resources, however, most Native people realize that peaceful protest is an effective way to bring attention to our issues. The Idle No More movement developed from widespread anger over the plight of First Nation communities across Canada, as well as the elimination of protections for our lands, rivers and lakes. They are still alive and well and you can check out their website at www.idlenomore.ca

Many First Nation governments are now signing agreements with resource developers that enshrine mutual respect and a willingness to share the benefits of development. This is a relatively new concept in Canada. A couple of decades ago billions of dollars in resource development in our own backyards would fatten the pockets of a small elite while leaving local Native people with few employment opportunities and long-term environmental damage. I don't blame many of my people if they are bitter about living difficult lives on reserves while their non-Native neighbours lived in affluence off the natural resources of our traditional lands.

The fact is that there are still many First Nation communities that don't have proper housing, jobs, drinking water or education opportunities. This is now changing. In growing numbers we are becoming doctors, lawyers, managers, accountants and teachers. When I look at the First Nation organizations in Canada today I see many well-educated, articulate professionals who are dealing with governments and corporations in making life better for Native people across the country. We are getting smarter in the European way of living while at the same time keeping our traditions and culture alive.

Native people have a huge interest in this wide breadth of land we call Canada and we want to participate in development and its economic benefits. However, we want to do this in a way that protects the land, water and wildlife. We only have one planet and we must take care of our home for future generations.

I know how difficult life is in a Canadian First Nation community and understand that we are still in the early stages of dealing with so many issues, including residential schools, the '60s scoop, drug-and-alcohol abuse and the lack of education and motivation. But I am hopeful we are on the right track and I am very proud of those Native people who stand up to be heard in peaceful demonstrations. All Canadians should ensure we do not allow the erosion of our democratic rights and the damage that would do to our society. My heartfelt thanks to all the Omushkegowuk Walkers for trekking in peace and respect to Ottawa. Let's hope that their voices are heard.

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You can also enter the contest at Facebook/NATIONnewsmagazine.com or nationnews.ca

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Meetings in Mistissini: Alcoholics Anonymous, Tuesday's Hope Meeting, are at 7PM at the Mamou-Wechidodow Building Amisk Street. **Alanon Meetings** are on Tuesdays as well at 7PM at the Mamou-Wechidodow Building Amisk Street. **Alateen Meetings** are on Mondays at 3:30PM at the Reception Centre 282 Main Street. These meetings are all open meetings.

TD Scholarships for Community Leadership - Apply today! Applications available at Your high school or CEGEP (in Quebec) Online at www.td.com/scholarship or Call 1-800-308-8306 TTY (Text telephone) 1-800-361-1180

Cultural Manual for Foster and Adoptive parents of Aboriginal Children, launched at the last Gathering of the NETWORK on October 3... CHECK IT OUT! www.reseaumtlnetwork.com/eng/Portals/5/Cultural%20Manual.pdf

The Aviva Community Fund is Canada's longest running online community competition. With over $2.5 million dollars given away to date, the Aviva Community Fund is making a difference in communities across the country. Submit your idea for positive change and have a chance at sharing in this year's $1 million Aviva Community Fund.

For more info go to http://www.avivacommunityfund.org/

Kid's Help Phone Line: 1-800-668-6868 (www.kidshelpphone.ca)

Youth Helpline: 1-800-263-2266 (www.teljeunes.com)

Parents' Helpline: 1-800-361-5085 (www.parenthelpline.ca)

Missing Children's Network: They'll help you find kids who have run away or disappeared. 514-843-4333 (www.enfant-retourquebec.ca)

Drug Addiction help and reference: 1-800-265-2626 (www.drogue-aidereference.qc.ca)

Gambling Addiction help and reference: 1-800-265-2626 (www.info-reference.qc.ca)

S.O.S. Conjugal Violence: 1-800-363-9010 (www.sosviolenceconjugale.com)

Health and Sexuality Resources Center: 1-888-855-7432 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm) (www.criss.org)

Gay Helpline: 1-888-505-1010 (Monday to Friday, 8 am to 3 am and Saturday-Sunday, 11 am to 3 am)

The Native Women's Shelter of Montreal: 1-866-403-4688 (www.nwsm.info)

Suicide Action Québec: 1-866-277-3553 (www.suicide-quebec.net)

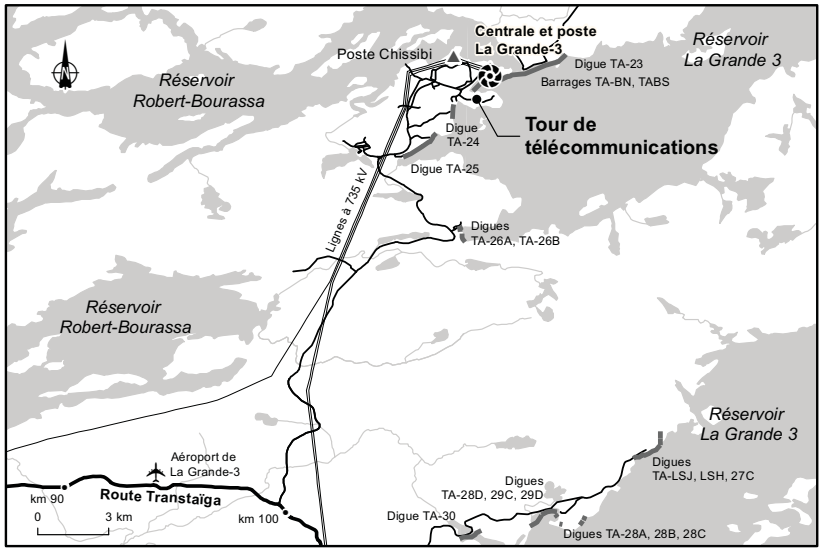
Residential School Survivors: A 24 hour toll-free crisis line is available to provide immediate emotional assistance and can be reached 24-hours a day, seven days a week: 1-866-925-4419. Other support services and information for survivors is available on the AFN website at: www.afn.ca/residentialschools/resources

Hydro Québec

AVIS PUBLIC

Remplacement d'une tour de télécommunications

Hydro-Québec doit remplacer une tour de télécommunications située dans le secteur de la centrale La Grande-3. Cette nouvelle tour assurera la pérennité des installations et améliorera la couverture des postes mobiles de radiocommunications à la centrale.



Caractéristiques techniques

La tour aura une hauteur de 70 m (75 m avec les antennes) et sera haubanée. Elle sera équipée d'un système de balisage conforme aux normes de Transports Canada.

Échéancier et déroulement des travaux

- Mise en place des fondations : printemps 2014
- Assemblage de la tour : été 2014
- Mise en service : été 2014
- Démantèlement de l'ancienne tour : été 2014

Pendant la construction, Hydro-Québec veillera attentivement à la sécurité sur le chantier et contrôlera l'accès à celui-ci. L'entreprise portera une attention particulière au respect des normes environnementales applicables dans le cadre d'un tel projet.

Pour plus d'information

Pour toute question ou tout commentaire, veuillez communiquer avec Hydro-Québec avant le 7 avril 2014 :

- par téléphone, sans frais, au 1 800 679-9919, option 5
- par la poste, à l'adresse suivante :

Richard Simard
Conseiller – Relations avec le milieu
Direction régionale – La Grande Rivière
511, Route 167 Sud
Case postale 100
Chibougamau (Québec) G8P 2K5

- par courriel, simard.richard.3@hydro.qc.ca

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- Assisting project managers with projects
- Participating in phone answering – directing calls and messages
- Organize meetings and events
- Opening the office
- Performing other clerical duties on an as needed basis

Skills Required:
- 1-2 years of proven work experience in an office environment.
- Strong interpersonal skills
- Ability to multi-task
- Willingness to expand knowledge base
- Team player
- Excellent communication skills
- Knowledge of Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Outlook
- Proactive problem solver
- A positive attitude
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- A diploma in office administration is a plus

Beesum mainly works for aboriginal clients and also specializes in native communications for non-aboriginal entities. Knowledge of first Nation's peoples is an asset.

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